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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [ELTN](#) [EAIR](#) [EWWT](#) [ETTC](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: New Transport Minister Supports Greater Cooperation with
U.S. Counterpart

REF: CAIRO 33

CLASSIFIED BY: Donald A. Blome, Minister-Counselor, State, Economic
and Political Affairs; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (SBU) Ambassador made a courtesy call February 1 on newly appointed Egyptian Minister of Transport Alaa El Din Fahmy. Appointed January 3, 2010, Transport Minister Fahmy is responsible for all safety, operations, and infrastructure issues relating to civil aviation, marine transport, ports, river and canal transport, railroads, and roads and highways. Fahmy told Ambassador that safety and human resource development are his priorities. Fahmy succeeded ex-Minister Mohamed Mansour, who had resigned in October as Transport Minister following a train accident which killed 18 and prompted wide public criticism of the long-term safety record of Egypt's railroads.

¶2. (SBU) Ambassador raised U.S. support for the draft Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) between the Transport Ministry and U.S. Department of Transportation, which would facilitate technical assistance and information exchange or best practices. Ambassador noted the draft MOC had been the subject of discussion during the March 2009 call by former Transport Minister Mohamed Mansour on Secretary of Transportation LaHood. She said the draft MOC embodied an initiative on which she hoped MOT and USDOT would be able to go forward at a mutually appropriate time. Minister Fahmy agreed, and asked his staffer, Ms. Nevine El Deeb, to follow up with Embassy Econoff on the details and status of the MOC.

¶3. (C) Bio information: Alaa El Din Fahmy was the head of the Egyptian National Postal Authority (ENPA) prior to his current appointment. He also organized, and headed the National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (NTRA). Fahmy is seen as a member of Prime Minister Nazif's trusted circle; prior to their entering government service in 2005, Fahmy was a private sector (IT) associate of Nazif and of Telecommunications Minister Kamel. Fahmy attended Military Technical College, a major feeder institution for the armed services, where he told Ambassador he had been a student during the 1973 war, and served for some time as an Air Force officer. He told the Ambassador he still feels a strong loyalty to the Air Force. Some post contacts have suggested Fahmy lacks vision and decisiveness. Though he speaks somewhat haltingly and may not understand idiomatic English, Fahmy has a generally good command of the language.

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